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Letter dated 1 February 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the fifty-second monthly report of the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) (see annex). The report covers the period from 22 December 2017 to 23 January 2018.

As previously reported, 25 of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities declared by the Syrian Arab Republic have been verified by the OPCW Technical Secretariat as having been destroyed. Following an initial inspection at the remaining two sites, OPCW has been working with the United Nations Office for Project Services to make the arrangements necessary to assist the Syrian Arab Republic in destroying these two facilities.

I take note of the work being undertaken in the context of outstanding issues relating to the declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic and reiterate the importance of resolving these issues. I trust that the Syrian Arab Republic will extend the full cooperation necessary to OPCW in this regard. I further note that the results of the second inspection by OPCW at the Scientific Studies and Research Centre of the Syrian Arab Republic will be reported in due course.

The work of the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic is ongoing, including through the visit of a team from the fact-finding mission to Damascus in January, at the request of the Government. I note that the fact-finding mission is continuing to study all information available relating to allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the country and, in this regard, I reiterate my grave concern over continuing allegations of such use. No justification exists for the use of these weapons, by any party and under any circumstances, nor is there any justification for impunity for their use.

The fact of these continuing allegations again highlights the shared obligation to identify and hold to account those responsible for the use of chemical weapons. This obligation did not end with the mandate of the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism. Accordingly, I reiterate my call for the Security Council to demonstrate unity on this matter.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled "Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme", prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Executive Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1, and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), both dated 27 September 2013, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 22 December 2017 to 23 January 2018 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Ahmet **Üzümcü**

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

Note by the Director-General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

Background

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.

2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities" (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation "in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1".

3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria" (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015) noting the Director-General's intent to include reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) in Syria, along with information on the Council's discussion thereof, as part of the monthly reporting pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). Similarly, the Council, at its Eighty-First Session, adopted a decision entitled "Report by the Director-General Regarding the Declaration and Related Submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-81/DEC.4, dated 23 March 2016), noting the Director-General's intent to provide information on the implementation of that decision.

4. The Council, at its Eighty-Third Session, adopted a decision entitled "OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism Reports on Chemical Weapons Use in the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016). In subparagraph 12(a) of that decision, the Council decided that the Director-General shall "regularly inform the Council on the implementation of this decision and incorporate information regarding the implementation of this decision into his monthly reporting to the United Nations Security Council, through the United Nations Secretary-General, regarding EC-M-33/DEC.1".

5. This, the fifty-second monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to the period from 22 December 2017 to 23 January 2018.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

6. Progress by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:

(a) The Secretariat has verified the destruction of 25 of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. As previously reported, in November 2017 the Secretariat conducted an initial inspection

of the last two stationary above-ground facilities in accordance with paragraph 44 of Part V of the Verification Annex to the Chemical Weapons Convention. Thanks to the voluntary contributions provided by States Parties to the Syria Trust Fund for the Destruction of Chemical Weapons, including contributions provided in response to the Secretariat's Note S/1541/2017 (dated 9 October 2017), the Secretariat, together with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), has begun to make all the required arrangements to assist the Syrian Arab Republic in the destruction of the facilities located at these two sites.

(b) On 18 January 2018, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its fiftieth monthly report (EC-87/P/NAT.4, dated 19 January 2018) regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its CWPFs, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

7. As stated in previous reports, all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have now been destroyed.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to Executive Council decisions EC-81/DEC.4 and EC-83/DEC.5

8. During the reporting period, the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) completed the translation of the 19 documents submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic on 10 November 2017. The analysis of the documents is being finalised, and the results will be reported to the Council at its Eighty-Seventh Session, in March 2018.

9. As stated by the Director-General in his opening statement to the Conference of the States Parties at its Twenty-Second Session (C-22/DG.20, dated 27 November 2017), the second round of inspections at the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the Scientific Studies and Research Centre (SSRC) in accordance with paragraph 11 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5 was concluded on 22 November 2017. The samples taken during the mission were sealed, packaged and shipped to the OPCW Laboratory, and were received at the Laboratory in the presence of representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic on 15 January 2018. The samples will be split, also in the presence of representatives of the Syrian Arab Republic, upon their request, and sent to two OPCW designated laboratories for analysis. A report on the second round of inspections will be submitted in due course.

Other activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

10. UNOPS continues to provide support to the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with an agreement concluded between UNOPS, the OPCW, and the Syrian Arab Republic on 22 November 2017.

11. As at the cut-off date of this report, one OPCW staff member was deployed as part of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Supplementary resources

12. As previously reported, a Trust Fund for Syria Missions was established in November 2015 to support the OPCW FFM and other remaining activities, such as those of the DAT. As at the cut-off date of this report, the total contribution stood at EUR 15.7 million. Contribution agreements had been concluded with Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Monaco, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Sweden,

Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the European Union.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

13. Guided by Council decisions EC-M-48/DEC.1 and EC-M-50/DEC.1 (dated 23 November 2015), as well as by United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the FFM continued to study all available information relating to the allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

14. In response to Note Verbale 109 (dated 17 November 2016) from the Syrian Arab Republic, which transmitted information relating to incidents and requested that the Director-General dispatch OPCW experts to investigate these incidents, an FFM team was dispatched to Damascus from 7 to 12 January 2018. The FFM team recovered and transported biomedical and environmental samples to the OPCW Laboratory.

Conclusion

15. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will be on the activities of the FFM and on the implementation of Council decisions EC-83/DEC.5 and EC-81/DEC.4, including declaration-related issues, as well as on the verification of the destruction of the two stationary above-ground facilities, and annual inspections of the underground structures already verified as destroyed.